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SUBJECT: TWO MORE MASS INCIDENTS IN CHONGQING

REF: CHENGDU 152

CLASSIFIED BY: John Hill, Acting Consul General, Chengdu,
Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (C) Summary. Coming hard on the heels of a spate of recent "mass incidents," (reftel), two more demonstrations in Chongqing appear to have involved thousands of people. One was sparked by the unsolved murder of a middle school student, the other by land takings for industrial development. In one incident rioters are said to have turned their wrath on a photo of Hu Jintao. End summary.

YOUYANG

12. (SBU) International news agencies reported that several thousand residents of Chongqing's Youyang County attacked a government office building on June 29. According to those reports, many residents were upset about the police's handling of the murder of a middle school student, and began massing in front of the school to complain. Following the beating of several of the protestors by police, the crowd grew in size, and then attacked a neighboring government office building. The reports claimed no deaths, although ten people were allegedly injured and several detained by police.

13. (C) Employees at both the Youyang municipal offices and at the Youyang Zhongduo Middle School (the scene of the disturbance) refused to discuss the matter with Consulate staff. However, several Chinese-language blogs carried articles detailing the disturbance and containing cellphone videos of the riot (see for one such source). According to those websites, a middle school student surnamed Dong was stabbed to death by schoolmates on June 28. When his mother and sister went to the school, officials refused to let them see the body. After news of those events circulated, dozens of Youyang residents began congregating at the school, complaining loudly that the boy had not received proper medical attention, and that the police had not handled the case properly. This led to the police beatings, which in turn led to the participation of more residents in the demonstration. Ultimately, the demonstrators attacked the government office building, smashing at least one police car in the process, and tearing a photo of Hu Jintao and a poster promoting the "Eight Honors and Eight Shames" to shreds.

14. (C) Contacted by telephone, Chongqing labor rights attorney Zhou Litai (strictly protect) said that he had heard of the disturbance, but had no additional information. He later called

back to report that contacts in Youyang had confirmed the information contained in the blogs. He also said those contacts had told him that the demonstrators were upset not only because of the middle school student's murder, but also because of recent hydropower developments in the area, which had displaced many farmers.

15. (SBU) Note: Youyang County is one of the poorest counties in Chongqing. Its population is heavily minority, with most residents belonging to the Tujia and Miao peoples. End note.

YANJIA

16. (SBU) International news agencies carried reports of another disturbance in Chongqing's Yanjia Township (in Changshou County) in early July, allegedly lasting for three days and involving several thousand participants. According to those reports, the demonstration was triggered by the taking of farmland for the expansion of an industrial park. As in the Youyang incident, residents supposedly attacked a government office building and smashed police vehicles. However, Consulate staff were unable to obtain independent confirmation of the event.

HILL